

# Historic Takoma Inc., 2008 Annual Report

## Activities and Accomplishments – Highlights

### *Restoration Work on 7328 Carroll Avenue*

In 2008, HTI continued intensive restoration activities with the assistance of several public and private funding sources. Highlights of the work include the removal of old equipment, ductwork, debris, pipes and wiring; the installation of energy efficient HVAC equipment and ductwork; the installation of a new electrical system and temporary lighting; repair and restoration of the tin ceiling, two skylight wells and the external skylight structures; repair of the building roof; repair work on the front bay window and replacement of broken glass; and replication of the original front door from old photographs in HTI's archive collection.

In 2008, HTI applied for a grant from the City of Takoma Park and the Arts and Humanities Commission of Montgomery County to finish the interior shell in 2009. This will allow storage and access to our archive collection by the late summer/fall of 2009 and reinstatement of educational programs and displays.

### *2008 House and Garden Tour*

The 35th annual House and Garden Tour was held on Sunday, May 4, 2008. The DC portion of the Takoma community was the showcase of the Tour, which included large, stately homes, and cozy bungalows. Two important public buildings, the first branch of DC Public Library and Trinity Episcopal Church, were also featured. Public transit, often the subject of current headlines, played a major role in the early development of the Takoma DC neighborhood. When B.F. Gilbert acquired the first 100-acre tract of what would become Takoma Park in 1883, it straddled the District/Maryland border and the right-of-way of the B & O Railroad's Metropolitan Branch. From the outset, Gilbert targeted employees of the federal government in search of affordable homes and lured them to the new sylvan suburb in part by touting the affordable (5 cents each way) commute on the frequently running trains. As in the past several years, in addition to the revenue garnered from ticket sales, a substantial number of pledges were received by Tour "sponsors."

### *City of Takoma Park Funding for HTI*

In its 2009 budget, the City of Takoma Park has designated up to \$25,000 for HTI to do work associated with taking over the assessment and storage of the City's archives. The last several years HTI has received a donation from the City in support of the House and Garden Tour. The City is now considering a policy to govern the grants it makes to Nonprofit Organizations. The City has budgeted \$5,000 in its FY09 budget to cover grants to all local nonprofit groups, and intends to develop a policy to guide it in allocating these funds.

### *Input Into Activities in Area Historic Districts and Related Matters*

Shaping change to preserve the historic character of our community is one of Historic Takoma's most important functions. HTI reviews and advises the Montgomery County Preservation

Commission and DC Historic Preservation Review Board on Historic Area Work Permits having a major impact on the district, testifies in Commission and Review Board hearings, and works with developers to encourage positive change that contributes to the economic vitality of the city while preserving its unique character. HTI also holds a seat on the Takoma Park Façade Advisory Board and Montgomery Preservation. Inc. During 2008, HTI was active in a number of areas, including: 1) input into several potential development projects including Ecco Park (235 Carroll Avenue, NW), Douglas Development project, Willow and Maple Streets, NW, and 6901 Laurel Avenue, Urciolo property; 2) Fire Station re - construction, Carroll and Philadelphia Avenues; 3) continuing to work to with WMATA Board and DC/MD officials regarding community concerns about development of the Takoma metro site; 4) ill-conceived proposals for traffic circles at the Junction; 5) supporting preservation efforts in Silver Spring, including the Falkland apartment complex and the Perpetual Building.

### ***Educational Outreach***

Marking its tenth year of cooperation with Piney Branch Elementary School, HTI led each of the eight fourth grade classes on a guided walking tour of Takoma Park. The students prepared for their tours by reading "Takoma Park A-Z: A Kids Guide to the Town that Gilbert Built" a textbook written by HTI several years ago to enhance this learning experience. In fall 2008, HTI worked with Takoma Park Elementary School staff to help a second grade enrichment class create a historical timeline of Takoma Park.

Finally, the Takoma Park City Council passed a resolution declaring November 24 as B.F. Gilbert Day, commemorating the date 125 years ago when the city's founding father took title to the first acres of what became the suburb of Takoma Park.

### ***Work on Membership Database***

During 2008, HTI was able to more fully implement its membership management software and correct many data errors that had crept into the database in recent years. These actions have produced a more complete and accurate membership database and have improved HTI's ability to communicate with members. Towards the end of the year, HTI began sending out letters of acknowledgment to all new and renewing members, thanking them for their membership contribution and identifying the donated amount and the form of payment.

### ***Annual Meeting and Election of Officers and Board Members***

The annual meeting was held on December 14, 2008, at the Cady Lee house. Sabrina Baron was re-elected President, Lorraine Pearsall Vice President, Jim DiLuigi Treasurer and Caroline Alderson Secretary. David Paris was re-elected to the board and Jack Carson was also elected as a new board member.